

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 267

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: EEC, ENRG, PFOR

SUBJECT: EC COMMISSION OFFICIAL'S VIEWS ON THE JANUARY 20

EC COUNCIL DISCUSSION ON ENERGY

REFS: A) EC BRUSSELS 550 B) EC BRUSSELS 308 C) STATE 9402

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN SEPARATE MEETINGS WITH EC COMMISSION VICE PRESIDENT SIMONET, AND DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR EXTERNAL RELATIONS WELLENSTEIN, WE OBTAINED FURTHER REACTIONS TO THE DISCUSSION OF ENERGY ISSUES AT THE JANUARY 20 EC COUNCIL MEETING. NEITHER WAS SATISFIED WITH THE RESULT AND WELLENSTEIN WENT SO FAR AS TO CHARACTERIZE MOST OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DISCUSSION AS "DISMAL." WELLENSTEIN DID FEEL, HOWEVER,

THAT THE MEETING HAD THE PSYCHOLOGICAL MERIT OF
FOCUSSING THE FOREIGN MINISTERS' ATTENTION ON ISSUES
WHICH MUST BE FACED URGENTLY. END SUMMARY.

2. SIMONET AND WELLENSTEIN BOTH INDICATED THAT A
MAJOR COMMISSION OBJECTIVE WAS TO TRY TO FORCE THE
COUNCIL TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES
AND WITH THE IMPERATIVES OF THE TIMETABLE INVOLVED IN
MOVING TOWARD A PRODUCER/CONSUMERS CONFERENCE. THE
COMMISSION HAD TABLED ITS PAPERS (REFTEL B AND SEPTTEL)
IN AN EFFORT TO PUSH THE COUNCIL TOWARD DECISION ON
SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS COMING UP AT THE IEA GOVERNING
BOARD MEETING ON FEBRUARY 5-7. WELLENSTEIN NOTED THAT
THE COMMUNITY HAD MADE LITTLE PROGRESS ON THE CENTRAL
ISSUES OF SHORT-TERM ENERGY AND THEREFORE WAS UNLIKELY
TO HAVE A COMMON POSITION IN THE IEA. HE BELIEVES THE
JANUARY 20 COUNCIL PROVIDED FURTHER EVIDENCE OF THE
FOREIGN MINISTERS' RELUCTANCE TO COME TO GRIPS WITH
THESE BASIC PROBLEMS. WELLENSTEIN OBSERVED THAT THERE
SEEMS TO BE AN ILLUSION AMONG THE EC MEMBERS THAT
"EVERYTHING CAN BE DONE IN THE IEA," WHEREAS IN FACT
THE SUBSTANTIVE PROBLEMS AND NEED FOR HARD DECISIONS
WILL NOT GO AWAY AND HAVE TO BE FACED IRRESPECTIVE
OF THE FORUM.

3. DESPITE THE SOMEWHAT DESULTORY NATURE OF THE EC
COUNCIL'S DISCUSSION ON JANUARY 20, WELLENSTEIN SAID
HE FELT THE MEETING HAD INDEED SERVED SOME PURPOSE
IN THAT IT HAD FORCE THE MINISTERS TO RECOGNIZE
THAT THE ISSUES INVOLVED IN MOVING TOWARD THE
PRODUCERS/CONSUMERS CONFERENCE MUST BE FACED AS A
HIGH PRIORITY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.

4. BOTH SIMONET AND WELLENSTEIN SAID THE FRENCH HAD
NOT RPT NOT TABLED ANY SPECIFIC PROPOSALS AT THE
MEETING. SIMONET NOTED THAT THE FRENCH HAD AGREED
TO THE COMMISSION'S PAPER ON THE NEED FOR CONSULTATION
IN THE EC PRIOR TO TAKING POSITIONS IN THE IEA. HE
REGRETTED THAT THE MOST LIKELY OUTCOME BECAUSE OF THE LACK
OF PROGRESS TOWARD A COMMON EC POSITION, WOULD BE THAT
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THE MEMBER STATES WOULD ACT INDEPENDENTLY IN THE AGENCY.

5. ACCORDING TO SIMONET, THE DISCUSSION OF THE DETAILS
OF THE CONSUMER/PRODUCER CONFERENCE HAD BEEN DISJOINTED
AND INCONCLUSIVE DUE IN PART TO MISUNDERSTANDINGS AT
THE MEETING. HE SAID CALLAGHAN'S CLEAR RELUCTANCE TO
TO AGREE EVEN IN PRINCIPLE TO THE COMMUNITY AS SUCH
BEING REPRESENTED PREVENTED ANY DISCUSSION OF HOW THE

COMMUNITY MIGHT IN FACT BE REPRESENTED. CONTRARY TO SOME REPORTS WE HAVE HEARD HE SAID SAUVAGNARGUES HAD INDICATED THT, SINCE ON THE COMSUMER SIDE IT WAS THE FRENCH WHO HAD PROPOSED THE CONFERENCE, ELEMENTARY DECENCY WOULD DICTATE THAT THEY SHOULD CHAIR AT LEAST THE PREPARATORY MEETING. ACCORDING TO WELLENSTEIN, SAUVAGNARGUES POINTED OUT THAT FRANCE ACCEPTS THE FACT THAT THE PRODUCERS/CONSUMERS CONFERENCE WAS YAMANI'S PROPOSAL AND THAT THEREFORE PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE MUST BE BASED ON HIS IDEAS-- "WE MUST MARRY YAMANI'S PROPOSALS WITH OUR OWN."

6. WE INFORMED THEM OF THE US VIEW ON FRANCE/IEA COORDINATION PURSUANT TO REFTTEL C. THEY WRE PLEASED TO SEE THAT THE POSITION RECOGNIZES THE COMMUNITY AS ONE LOCUS FOR SUCH COORDINATION.
GREENWALD

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